

COPPER CHROME ARSENATE TREATED TIMBER, USE

2034. Hon Jim Scott to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Health

- (1) Is the Government planning to ban or phase out the use of copper chrome arsenate (CCA) or arsenic trioxide treated wood products -
  - (a) on education department property; and
  - (b) for school playground uses?
- (2) Is the Minister aware the Australian Pesticide and Veterinarian Medicines Authority recommended that 'Product labels be varied such that uses of CCA timber treatment products are not permitted on timber intended for use in structures such as picnic tables, deckings, handrails and children's play equipment'?
- (3) Is the Minister aware that the Commission of European Communities, in its directive 2003/02/EC, required member States to stop use by June 30 2004 of CCA treated timber where people would be likely to have direct skin contact?
- (4) Has the Minister corresponded with the Health Minister regarding the use of CCA treated wood in schools and school playgrounds?
- (5) If yes, will the Minister table that correspondence?
- (6) Is the Government able to advise parents that contact with CCA treated wood at school has no potential to cause any adverse effects on the health of their child?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

- 1) (b)-(b) The process that is occurring in relation to copper chrome arsenate (CCA) treated timber is as follows. The Commonwealth Authority responsible for registration of pesticide products, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), is reviewing CCA chemical products used in treating timber. The APVMA released a draft of its review in December of last year for public comment. The APVMA has not yet released the final report, but it is expected to be released this year. In the final report the APVMA will be publishing the actions it will be taking in relation to CCA chemical products. These actions fall under Commonwealth jurisdiction and as such if a ban or phase out is proposed it will be done under Commonwealth legislation across Australia. Therefore Western Australia will wait for the APVMA to finalise its review and see what actions the Commonwealth will be taking in relation to this matter.
- 2) Yes. This recommendation was contained in the draft review and as this is an issue of national registration, the APVMA will release its final recommendations in due course.
- 3) Yes.
- 4) No.
- 5) There has been no correspondence.
- 6) Yes. The APVMA in their draft review have stated that "...the Authority does not have evidence to conclude that the existing structures are unsafe". The APVMA is liaising closely with the US EPA in relation to the US EPA's assessment of this particular issue. The Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing has undertaken a health risk assessment that indicated that a child's intake of arsenic from playgrounds combined with background arsenic would be well below health standards (tolerable daily intakes) set by the World Health Organisation and Food Standards Australia and New Zealand.